would render themselves liable to exemplary punishment. It has also emphasised that senior officers should continuouly guide investigating officers during inspections and meetings and impress upon them the need for adopting correct and prescribed methods of investigation. Apart from specific guidelines, State Governments have been advised that there is a necessity to bring about qualitative change in the approach and behaviour of the Police towards the general public. Human Rights as a subject has been introduced in the curricula of several Police Training Institutes, including the premier training Institute for IPS Officers viz., the National Police Academy, Hyderabad.

Protecting Indian Fishermen

278. SHRI R. MARGABANDU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India will take steps to retrieve Katchatheevu Island from Sri Lanka;

(b) whether India is aware of the attack on Indian fishermen in the Bay of Bengal;

(c) what steps the Central Government has taken to save the above said fishermen; and

(d) whether Government are aware of the repeated requests made by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister to protect Indian fishermen from the onslaught of Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) Government regard the delimitation of Indo-Sri Lanka Maritime Boundary through the Agreement of 1974 and 1976 as a settled matter. In terms of the Agreements, the Katchateevu lies on the Sri Lankan side of the International Boundary Line.

(b) to (d) Government have received reports of attacks on Indian fishermen in the Palk Straits. The Government of India has taken up strongly with the Government of Sri Lanka the incidents where involvement of Sri Lankan forces is reported by the fishermen, expressing its concern, calling for expeditious release and/or compensating for injury/damage as appropriate. The Government of Sri Lanka has denied involvement in these incidents. Attacks by LTTE on Indian fishermen have also come to Government's notice.

Bilateral discussions were held in October, 1993 and in March 1994 to discuss measures for preventing such incidents of attacks on Indian fishermen in future. Both sides agreed that there is need to implement effective measure devised to prevent recurrence of such incidents. The issue was taken up during the visit of the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka in December, 1994 and with the President of Sri Lanka during her visit in March, 1995. The two sides have agreed on the need to continue the process of bilateral discussions to resolve this issue. Reports of attacks on Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan navy have become less frequent since August, 1995. Meanwhile, Government agencies and Coast Guards caution Indian fishermen against transgressing the International Border Line. This advices has been reiterated in view of the disturbed conditions in the north of Sri Lanka.

Government are aware of requests made by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister to prevent harassment to Indian fishermen.

Extinction of Medicinal Plants

279. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of medicinal plants in the country are on the verge of extinction;

(b) whether Government have identified these plants; if so, their names and uses;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some pharmaceutical companies are exploiting these scarce plants in a big way; and

(d) if so, whether Government have chalked out any plan to grow these plants and also to save them from exploitation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) The Botanical Survey of India conducts surveys of flora including the medicinal plants in the country and identifies rare and endangered species.

These rare and endangered species, which include medicinal plants alongwith their names and uses, are published in the "Red Data Book of Indian Plants". Three volumes of the Red Data Book have been published so far a copy each of which have been sent to the library of the Parliament. According to these surveys, some medicinal plants have become vulnerable to extinction.

(c) The Government has not received reports of large scale exploitation of scarce plants from the wild by pharmaceutical companies.

(d) Assistance is provided to botanic gardens for creating facilities for ex-situ conservation for endangered and endemic plants, which include medicinal plants under a centrally sponsored scheme. In addition, there is a scheme captioned Conservation and Development of Non-Timber forest Produce, including Medicinal Plants under the National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board which promotes cultivation of medicinal plants alongwith other Non-Timber Forest Produce plants. Besides, regulation of anthropoganic activities in the protected areas, namely, Biosphere Reserves, National Parks and Sanctuaries, is expected to protect medicinal plants in these areas from over-exploitation and extinction.

Proposal to Split ONGC

280. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to Split the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) into six independent companies with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited as holding company; and

(b) if so, the rationable behind this restructuring?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR): (a) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government at present.

(b) Does not arise.

मध्य प्रदेश के गांवों में डाकघरों का खोला जाना

281. **श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव:** क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने मध्य प्रदेश के शहरी और ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में पड़ने वाले सभी गांवों में डाकघर खोलने की कोई योजना बनायी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान कार्यान्वयन हेतु बनायी गयी योजनाओं का ब्यौरा क्या है और इस प्रयोजनार्थ जिला-वार कितनी-कितनी धनराशि आवंटित की गयी है; और

(ग) आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान छत्तीसगढ़ क्षेत्र में संचार नेटवर्क के विकास के लिए कुल कितनी धनराशि का प्रावधान किया गया है तथा विकास कार्यों का ब्यौरा क्या है?

संचार मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री सुखराम): (क) जी नहीं। राज्य के सभी गांवों में डाकघर खोलने की कोई योजना नहीं है। सरकार का उद्देश्य निर्धारित प्राथमिकताओं के अनुसार उत्तरोत्तर रूप से डाकघर खोलना है, बशर्ते कि दूरी, जनसंख्या और आय संबंधी मानदंड पूरे होते हों, और योजना निधि उपलब्ध रहे।

(ख) मध्य प्रदेश में वार्षिक योजना 1995-96 के दौरान 9 अतिरिक्त विभागीय शाखा डाकघर और 9 उप डाकघर खोलने की योजना बनाई गई है। वर्ष 1995-96 के दौरान मध्य प्रदेश में डाकघर खोलने के लिए 0.48 करोड़ रु० आवंटित किए गए हैं। धनराशि का जिलावार आवंटन नहीं किया जाता है।

(ग) जानकारी एकत्र की जा रही है और सभा पटल पर रख दी जाएगी।

Allotment of land by Paradeep Port Trust to Indian Oil Corporation

282. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state: